

Centre asks CMFRI to draft National Mariculture Policy

National consultation meet on “mariculture production”

The Centre has asked the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) to take lead in drafting the National Mariculture Policy jointly with the fisheries departments of coastal states and union territories for developing mariculture practices.

Addressing the two-day national consultation meet on “mariculture and open sea cage culture development” held at CMFRI, Mandapam, near here on Thursday, Devendra Chaudhry, Union Secretary to Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries asked CMFRI to come up with comprehensive guidelines for developing open sea and coastal mariculture practices in the country.

“In the present scenario there is conflict of interests between sectors such as fisheries, tourism, navigation, oil and natural gas exploration and shipping in the ocean and coast and the mariculture policy should be designed to avoid these conflicts,” he suggested. The CMFRI could circulate the draft mariculture policy to all maritime states, after which, the Centre would finalise it after obtaining feedback from the states and the stakeholders, he said.

He also asked the CMFRI to prepare an action plan to achieve four lakh tonnes of marine finfish production within five years in different locations of maritime states through mariculture.

Referring to the scarcity for seeds for cage culture, he said the Centre would facilitate setting up of brood bank under the CMFRI and regional hatcheries in different maritime states for augmenting marine fish seed production. Stressing the need for producing quality finfish seeds for cage and other mariculture activities, A. Gopalakrishnan, Director of CMFRI said lack of adequate seed supply often hampered the mariculture industry. “A brood bank of marine finfish as a national facility is the need of the hour”, he said.

He said the Mandapam Centre of CMFRI would act as nodal centre coordinating the national seed production programme and facilitate supply of seeds to various regional hatcheries in the country. “CMFRI has the technology for mass production of fish seeds of cobia, silver pompano, Indian pompano, orange spotted grouper and pink ear emperor,” he said.

Aditya Kumar Joshi, joint secretary, fisheries, said that maritime states need to submit proposal for financial assistance from the Centre for setting up of hatcheries, nurseries and cage farms in their respective states.